

Saltmarsh and Intertidal flats

Key Characteristics

- Marine alluvium and some outcrops of clay, forming mud flats
- Inter-tidal flats dissected by creeks
- A few small areas of saltmarsh
- Wild unimproved land
- Unsettled landscape
- Powerful sense of isolation and wildness
- Integral to the setting of notable features
- Suffering from coastal squeeze and the associated erosion

Location

These landscapes are found on the larger of the east flowing rivers in the county:

- the Butley River
- the rivers Blyth, Deben, Orwell, Alde and Stour.

Geology, landform and soils

The majority of this area consists of marine alluvium and some outcrops of clay forming mud flats with only a few comparatively small areas of saltmarsh.

Landholding and enclosure pattern

There is no visible enclosure pattern in these landscapes. All the units consist of wild unimproved land.

Settlement

This is an unsettled landscape - although it is integral to the setting of notable features such as Pin Mill.

Vegetation

The saltmarsh consists of inter-tidal flats dissected by creeks and covered with a low vegetation consisting principally of cord grass and samphire.

Visual experience

Often these landscapes form a fringing element to the upland or costal grazing marsh, however in the larger areas of mud on the flats, such as Holbrook Bay, a powerful sense of isolation and wildness can be found.

Condition

The remnant saltmarsh in the county does not (with one exception at Orford Ness) behave naturally in response to sea level change and as such is suffering from coastal squeeze and associated erosion.